

My name is Elizabeth Stone and I am a junior at the School Without Walls. As a junior in the DCPS system, it's sometimes hard to believe that I can make a difference in the system. To a single high school student, the seemingly endless layers of decision making is intimidating and seems foreboding to try and tackle alone. There does not seem to be any in—that is, there does not seem to be any way for me to have my voice heard. Being asked to be part of the DC GreatSchools advisory council gave me my “in.” This is my chance to voice opinions about DC schools and I know that I will be listened to. It is incredibly heartening to be a part of this program.

GreatSchool's presence in DC is beginning to mark a time when parents and students in DC will have easy access to understandable information about all schools in DCPS, including private and charter schools. This information is invaluable. I would have enjoyed having this information that this available to me when I was selecting high schools to apply to because it would have made the selection process more efficient and more transparent. With GreatSchools in DC, not only will students have access to the exact type of information they need when selecting a high school, but also parents will have the same information in order to select an elementary or middle school for their children.

As a member of the advisory council, I have seen first hand how hard GreatSchools works to ensure that all of their information is relevant and easy to read. The program works tirelessly to provide the unbiased information that helps parents decide if they should send their children to a DC private school, a DC charter school, or to a DC public school. Using the School Chooser, GreatSchools is capable of revolutionizing the way that parents access information about DC schools. The Chooser marks the first time all vital information about DC schools has been in one place. As GreatSchools continues to work with the DC State Board of Education, parents, teachers, schools, and students like myself, I see a revolution in how parents and students alike view and use school information for the better. This transparency is a step in the right direction for everyone.